CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for detecting the presence of contamination in a nucleic acid amplification reaction conducted on a sample, comprising the steps of:

conducting a first nucleic acid amplification reaction in said sample, wherein at least one first nucleic acid primer used in said first nucleic acid amplification reaction comprises a first portion that is complementary to a nucleic acid sequence in said sample, the amplification of which is desired, and a second portion that is not complementary to said nucleic acid sequence;

conducting a second nucleic acid amplification reaction in said sample wherein at least one second primer used in said second nucleic acid amplification reaction is complementary to said second portion; and

detecting contamination in said sample as the presence of amplicon in said second nucleic acid amplification reaction.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said second portion is not complementary to any contiguous nucleic acid present in said sample prior to said first nucleic acid amplification reaction.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein said first nucleic acid amplification reaction is selected from the group consisting of PCR, Q-PCR, and reverse-transcriptase PCR.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein said second nucleic acid amplification reaction is selected from the group consisting of PCR, Q-PCR, and reverse-transcriptase PCR.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein said amplicon is detected by sequence-specific nucleic acid probe capture.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein said first and second nucleic acid amplification reactions are conducted simultaneously.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein said first and second nucleic acid amplification reactions are conducted on DNA isolated from said sample.

8. A method for detecting contamination in a nucleic acid amplification reaction conducted on a sample, comprising the steps of:

conducting a first nucleic acid amplification reaction in said sample using at least one chimeric primer comprising a template-specific sequence and a 5' contamination detection sequence;

conducting a second nucleic acid amplification reaction in said sample using at least one primer that is substantially comlementary to said contamination detection sequence; and

detecting an amplicon produced in said second nucleic acid amplification reaction, the presence of which being indicative of contamination in said sample.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein said first nucleic acid amplification reaction comprises two chimeric primers.

10. The method of claim 8, wherein said second nucleic acid amplification reaction comprises two primers that are complementary to said contamination detection sequence.

11. The method of claim 8, wherein said sample is a biological sample.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein said sample is a stool sample.

13. The method of claim 8, wherein said amplification reaction is a polymerase chain reaction.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein said polymerase chain reaction is Q-PCR.

15. The method of claim 13, wherein said polymerase chain reaction is reverse-transcriptase PCR.